

# Houston County Habitat for Humanity Headlines



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## A New Home Brings a New Future

by Kathy Tran

Even though Habitat for Humanity has changed quite a bit since my brother, Tom, and I began volunteering many years ago, a few things still remain the same. I know the true significance of Habitat because I have witnessed its miracles firsthand - it changes lives. It changed my life.

My mother, Whitney, toiled endlessly at work and school, but our finances were still unstable. We plummeted into the depths of poverty. The only affordable place for us to live was a sullied, one-bedroom apartment in a treacherous district that was the scene of drug dealing, gang activity, and inescapable misery. However, my mother never gave up hope, and she never let our situation hinder us in any way.

In 1998, a man broke into our apartment and attacked my mother. It was the turning point in our lives. My mother knew she had to do everything she could to take us away from the dismal apartment and to lift us into a healthier life. Fortunately, in her moment of desperation, she discovered Habitat. Mr. Eubanks assured us that Habitat would help us escape the trouble, fear, and danger of our dreadful life. Habitat would build us a home. We were officially presented our new home, 309 Dixon Street, on August 26th, 2001. That happy day, after all the hardships we had endured, we were given a gift that many people are not fortunate enough to receive; the gift was not just a house - the gift was opportunity. My mother, brother, and I now had the opportunity to advance in life without fear. We had the opportunity to have successful futures. Habitat gave us that opportunity.

Our lives are now inspirational models of the American dream. Many people never even dare to dream of the things we have accomplished. My mother is now a successful registered nurse. Only a few years out of school, she has earned impressive position in the Intensive Care Unit. Tom is a thriving freshman at Mercer University on the pre-pharmaceutical track. Despite the difficulty of his accelerated courses, he continues to perform the violin and has even been recognized for his excellent academics on the Dean's List. I have recently been named Salutatorian and Most Likely to Succeed. This fall, I will attend Yale University as a premedical student.

From a life of ruin and destitution, we have overcome unspeakable adversity. Habitat was the catalyst to our new life. I often imagine what our lives would be like without Habitat, but I try to look towards the future - a future of beautiful homes and happy lives for many other families like mine. The goal of Habitat is to eliminate poverty and provide a glimmer of hope in the desolate world. It is relief in a life that too often seems inescapably bleak. I tell my family's story to encourage and inspire those in hard times. No matter the adversity of life, there is hope. For many of those in difficult situations, that hope will be Habitat for Humanity.

